COMMON CAUSES OF LOW BACK PAIN

**Sprain/strain**: Ligaments and/or muscles are torn and/or stretched.

**Herniated disc**: A slipped disc can pinch a nerve and cause back and/or leg pain.

**Sciatica**: An irritation of the sciatic nerve root can cause pain from lower back and buttock down the leg.

**Osteoarthritis**: “Wear and tear” arthritis increases as you age.

**Muscle spasms**: Muscles (or a group of muscles) tighten and contract, pulling on themselves and/or structures.

FACTORS THAT CAN LEAD TO (OR AGGRAVATE) A BAD BACK

**Poor posture and/or bad positioning**. Practice good posture whether you’re standing, sitting, or moving.

**Stress**. Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing and yoga.

**Inappropriate lifting**. Bend your knees and use your legs, not your back, to lift any objects, and avoid heavy lifting. Do not twist while lifting.

**Being overweight**. Getting closer to your optimal weight will ease strain on your back.

---

**Weill Cornell Spine Center**

*Providing multi-disciplinary services that include neurological surgery, pain medicine, neurology, neuromuscular medicine, and rehabilitation medicine.*

*Our goal is to get you feeling well again.*

**Call**: 212-746-7874  
**Toll-free**: 1-888-WC-BACKS

[weillcornellspinecenter.org](http://weillcornellspinecenter.org)

---

**WEILL CORNELL NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY**

Offices on the Upper East Side, Lower Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and Westchester  
[weillcornellbrainandspine.org](http://weillcornellbrainandspine.org)  
[Facebook.com/WeillCornellBrainandSpine](http://Facebook.com/WeillCornellBrainandSpine)

**WEILL CORNELL PAIN MEDICINE**

Offices on the Upper East Side, Upper West Side, and Lower Manhattan  
[weillcornellpainmedicine.com](http://weillcornellpainmedicine.com)

**WEILL CORNELL REHABILITATION MEDICINE**

Offices on the Upper East Side and Lower Manhattan  
[weillcornell.org/physmed/](http://weillcornell.org/physmed/)

**WEILL CORNELL NEUROLOGY**

Offices on the Upper East Side, Upper West Side, and Lower Manhattan  
[weillcornell.org/neurology](http://weillcornell.org/neurology)

---

**Weill Cornell Brain and Spine Center**

525 East 68th Street, Box 99  
Starr Pavilion, Suite 651  
New York, NY 10065

---

**Visit us online for news and updates**

- [WeillCornellBrainandSpine.org](http://WeillCornellBrainandSpine.org)
- [Facebook.com/WeillCornellBrainandSpine](http://Facebook.com/WeillCornellBrainandSpine)
- [Twitter.com/WCMCBrainSpine](http://Twitter.com/WCMCBrainSpine)
- [YouTube.com/BrainSpineCenter](http://YouTube.com/BrainSpineCenter)
• Set aside a regular private time for your exercises.
• Do not do back exercises when you have pain.
• If a particular exercise hurts you, don’t do it. Try again in a few days.
• Do your exercises on a firm, comfortable surface.
• Try doing your exercises twice a day.
• Increase your exercises slowly, maybe adding one repetition per day.
• Don’t expect immediate results.
• Be sure to WALK every day, at a comfortable pace.

Remember: Your own strong abdominal and back muscles are the best back support.